What is claimed is:

1. A method for operating an aircraft, comprising the steps of:

receiving guidance instructions and guidance parameters at a navigation computer;

transmitting automatic pilot instructions from said navigation computer to a flight control computer;

receiving control instructions and said automatic pilot instructions at said flight control computer; and

in an automatic pilot mode, generating a first plurality of operating commands based on said automatic pilot instructions at said flight control computer.

2. The method of Claim 1, further comprising, in a manual pilot mode, the step of generating a second plurality of operating commands based on said control instructions at said flight control computer.

3. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of receiving control parameters at said flight control computer.

4. The method of Claim 1, wherein said first and second pluralities of operating commands are based on a single control function.

5. The method of Claim 4, further comprising the step of validating said single control function.

6. The method of Claim 4, wherein said single control function is embedded in said flight control computer.

7. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of generating said automatic pilot instructions at said navigation computer based on said guidance instructions and on said guidance parameters.

8. The method of Claim 7, wherein said automatic pilot instructions correspond in nature to said control instructions.

9. The method of Claim 8, wherein said automatic pilot instructions and said control instructions correspond to a commanded vertical load factor.

10. The method of Claim 8, wherein said automatic pilot instructions and said control instructions correspond to a commanded roll rate.

11. The method of Claim 8, wherein said automatic pilot instructions and said control instructions correspond to a commanded yaw.

12. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of transmitting said automatic pilot instructions from said navigation computer to said flight control computer is performed so that said flight control computer receives said automatic pilot instructions directly from said navigation computer without an intermediate step.

13. A method for operating an aircraft, comprising the steps of:

transmitting automatic pilot instructions from a navigation computer directly to a flight control computer;

receiving control instructions and said automatic pilot instructions at said flight control computer;

in an automatic pilot mode, generating a first plurality of operating commands based on said automatic pilot instructions at said flight control computer; and

in a manual pilot mode, generating a second plurality of operating commands based on said control instructions at said flight control computer.

14. The method of Claim 13, wherein said first and second pluralities of operating commands are based on a single control function.

15. The method of Claim 14, further comprising the step of validating said single control function.

16. The method of Claim 14, wherein said single control function is embedded in said flight control computer.